

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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S E C R E T NICOSIA 1153

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOF PINT CY GR

SUBJECT: MAKARIOS CONFRONTATION WITH NATIONAL GUARD

REF: NICOSIA 883, 890, 897, 936, 1053, 1076

SUMMARY:

MAKARIOS AND NATIONAL GUARD STILL ON COLLISION COURSE. EMBASSY UNCERTAIN WHETHER COMMAND CONTROL OF NATIONAL GUARD FROM ATHENS AT THIS STAGE IS OR IS NOT A PROTECTION AGAINST INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE. ON BALANCE, WE THINK PARTIES' INTERESTS (INCLUDING OUR OWN) BEST SERVED IF NATIONAL GUARD DRAWS BACK FROM ANTI-MAKARIOS EFFORT AND IF MAKARIOS REFRAINS FROM EFFORT TO ACHIEVE FULL CONTROL OVER NG. USG SHOULD TRY INFORMALLY TO CONVINCE GOVTS OF CYPRUS AND GREECE OF THIS CONCLUSION, BUT MORE FORMAL USG ACTIVITY NOT RPT NOT INDICATED. END SUMMARY

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1. FROM SEVERAL SOURCES, WE GET FOLLOWING PICTURE AS TO

PRESENT STATE OF THE MAKARIOS/NATIONAL GUARD CONFRONTATION. ATHENS HAS GIVEN NO INDICATION IT PLANS TO TELL THE NATIONAL GUARD TO BACK AWAY FROM ITS DETERMINATION TO TRAIN AND COMMISSION THE CADET OFFICERS TO WHOM MAKARIOS AND COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TOOK EXCEPTION. (IN FACT, GREEK EMBASSY TELLS US DENISIS RETURNED FROM ATHENS WITH MESSAGE THAT NG GENERAL STAFF IS ONLY BODY COMPETENT "SELECT" CADET OFFICERS. WE THINK HE MEANS NGGS UNDER ORDERS NOT TO ACCEPT COUNCIL OF MINISTERS REVIEW.) THERE ARE ABOUT 60 SUCH OFFICERS OUT OF A TOTAL OF ABOUT 160 PRESENTLY BEING TRAINED AT POLEMEDHIA CAMP. WHEN TRAINING ENDS A REAL CRISIS POINT WILL ARISE OVER QUESTIONS OF OFFICERS' PAY AND DISCIPLINE OF TROOPS BENEATH THEM, IF NO ACCOMMODATION HAS BEEN FOUND BY THAT TIME.

2. THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS TAKEN NO VISIBLE STEPS TO DISCIPLINE, REASSIGN, OR OTHERWISE MUZZLE THE SPECIFIC GREEK OFFICERS TO WHOM MAKARIOS TOOK EXCEPTION IN HIS LETTER OF EARLY MAY TO GREEK GOVT.

3. THE PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR NATIONAL GUARD TO 12 OR 14 MONTHS IS STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE, AND MAKARIOS' ADVISERS EXPECT SOME ANNOUNCEMENT WITHIN A FEW DAYS. (NOTE: WE GET THE FEELING THAT MAKARIOS HAS NOT GOTTEN QUITE THE GROUND SWELL OF SUPPORT HE HOPED FOR IN THIS ISSUE, AND HE MAY STILL BE FEELING HIS WAY.) OTHER STEPS MAY WELL BE IN TRAIN.

4. IN GENERAL, ATHENS/NICOSIA RELATIONS REMAIN AT A VERY LOW POINT, WITH MAKARIOS REPORTEDLY TELLING GREEK AMB THAT HE PUTS NO STOCK IN GREEK FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENTS BECAUSE HE DOES NOT BELIEVE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS INFLUENCE IN ATHENS, AND WITH ATHENS CONTINUING TO PRESS HIM TO DISSOLVE THE GROUPS WHICH SUPPORT HIM, WHICH HE BRUSQUELY REJECTS.

5. "ASSURANCE" FLOATED ON THURSDAY BY GOCYPRUS PIO THAT CADET OFFICERS TO WHOM COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TOOK EXCEPTION WILL BE RETURNED TO RANKS APPARENTLY WAS SIMPLY A TRIAL BALLOON, WITH NO REASON TO BELIEVE NATIONAL GUARD COMMAND HAS AGREED.

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6. SERIES OF MEETINGS BETWEEN MAKARIOS AND GREEK AMB AND COMMANDER OF NATIONAL GUARD, PLUS HURRIED TRIP TO ATHENS OF LATTER, APPARENTLY HAVE DONE NOTHING TO RESOLVE THIS IMPASSE. CONFIDANT OF MAKARIOS POINTS OUT THAT NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDER HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FIGUREHEAD. SAME CONFIDANT DOES NOT KNOW WHAT NG CHIEF OF STAFF PAPADAKIS HAS DONE ON HIS TRIP TO ATHENS, BUT ASSUMES HE HAS BEEN ARGUING WITHIN GREEK MILITARY FOR TOUGH LINE AGAINST GOCYPRUS. AFTER BRIEF RETURN

LAST SUNDAY TO SAY FAREWELL, PAPADAKIS WILL FINISH TOUR AND LEAVE ISLAND. MAKARIOS APPARENTLY EXPECTS HIM TO BE AT LEAST AS MUCH TROUBLE IN GREECE AS HERE. GOCYPRUS HAS NOT YET BEEN TOLD NAME OF REPLACEMENT, SPECULATES IT WILL BE ELDYK COMMANDER KONDILIS, CHARACTERIZED BY GOC OFFICIAL AS A CRONY OF PAPADAKIS. (GREEK EMBASSY TELLS US, HOWEVER, THAT IT WILL BE UNNAMED GREEK OFFICER FROM ATHENS.)

7. COMMENT: MAKARIOS HAS LONG BITTERLY RESENTED INDEPENDENCE OF NATIONAL GUARD, APPARENTLY HAS BEEN STUNG BY INCREASINGLY ANTI-MAKARIOS BEHAVIOR OF NG OFFICERS TO UNDERTAKE SUSTAINED CAMPAIGN TO BRING IT UNDER CONTROL. WE DOUBT HE REALLY HAS MUCH HOPE IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE OF BRINGING IT UNDER HIS OPERATIONAL CONTROL, BUT HE SEEMS DETERMINED TO NEUTRALIZE IT AS A POLITICAL FORCE ON ISLAND, TO GAIN SOME CONTROL OVER GREEK OFFICER APPOINTMENTS AND OVER SELECTION AND INDOCTRINATION OF CYPRIOT CADET OFFICERS. FOR SOME NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS, WE SUSPECT VENDETTA IS REACHING POINT WHERE OBJECTIVE IS TO "GET MAKARIOS."

8. SITUATION POSES SOME DELICATE QUESTIONS FOR U.S. . POLICY. WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY ARGUED (SEE ASSESSMENT, NICOSIA A-26) THAT USG HAS AN INTEREST IN ATHENS RETENTION OF OPERATIONAL COMMAND OVER NATIONAL GUARD, ON BASIS THAT IT PROBABLY ASSIGNS A HIGHER PRIORITY THAN DOES MAKARIOS TO AVOIDANCE OF GRECO-TURKISH WAR AND WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO HOLD NATIONAL GUARD ON LEASH IF INTERCOMMUNAL FRICTIONS AROSE IN CYPRUS. AS NOTED NICOSIA 890, GREEK AND TURKISH BELLICOSITY OVER AEGEAN MAY HAVE INVALIDATED THAT ASSUMPTION. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT IN COMING MONTHS CYPRUS COULD BE DRAWN INTO GRECO-TURKISH CONFLICT RATHER THAN CAUSE OF IT. (INCIDENTALLY, WE UNDERSTAND THAT MAKARIOS TOLD NG COMMANDER

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THAT CYPRUS WOULD GO TO WAR TO HELP GREECE IF WAR STARTED OVER AEGEAN, BUT HE DIDN'T WANT NATIONAL GUARD MAKING DECISION HOW AND WHEN IT WOULD "RESCUE" CYPRUS FROM TURKS.)

9. ONE INDISPUTABLE ADVANTAGE OF GREATER GOCYPRUS CONTROL OVER NATIONAL GUARD WOULD BE TO TONE DOWN THE FERVENT ENOSIST PROPAGANDA PRESENTLY FED TO YOUNG DRAFTEES. (DENKTASH RECOGNIZES THIS POINT. SEE NICOSIA 1143.)

10. ON BALANCE, WE THINK USG SHOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO PERSUADE ATHENS OF LIKELIHOOD THAT EFFORT TO TOPPLE MAKARIOS WOULD GENERATE EXTREME INSTABILITY ON ISLAND AND COULD FACE GREECE WITH DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF HOW TO RESPOND TO ENOSISTS' DEMANDS THAT GREECE TAKE OVER CYPRUS. HOWEVER, USG HAS NO INTEREST IN FURTHERING ANY MAKARIOS DREAM OF ESTABLISHING

OPERATIONAL CONTROL OVER NATIONAL GUARD, PARTLY BECAUSE THE REASONING IN NICOSIA A-26 MAY REMAIN VALID, AND PARTLY BECAUSE THE EFFORT ITSELF WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY FURTHER INFLAME THE PRESENT CONFRONTATION AND WOULD PROBABLY REINFORCE NATIONAL GUARD COMMAND'S CONVICTION THAT ITS ONLY RECOURSE IS TO "GET" MAKARIOS.

11. IN THIS AS IN OTHER CURRENT ISSUES, WE THINK USG SHOULD BE NO FARTHER FORWARD THAN SIMPLY REMINDING PARTICIPANTS WHY THEIR OWN INTERESTS WOULD APPEAR TO BE SERVED BY SOME SORT OF COMPROMISE. IN THIS FEUD, NEITHER SIDE LIKELY TO PAY VERY MUCH ATTENTION TO OUTSIDERS UNLESS WE ARE READY TO ACCOMPANY OUR ADVICE WITH THREAT OF SANCTIONS, WHICH WE BELIEVE WOULD BE PREMATURE.
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